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Here's to free-range parenting

The Kohler Report: PAGE 15

A push for electric cars

Transportation.

Advocate tells city committee HRM should develop strategy



RUTH
DAVENPORT

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An electric vehicle advocate is asking the city to help cover the cost of installing dozens of new charging stations around Halifax in preparation for two major events this spring.

David Stevenson of Nova Scotian Electric Vehicle Highway Services presented to the municipal transportation standing committee Thursday, asking for \$16,000 to help cover the cost of 40 new charging stations.

He said the addition of charging stations across HRM could prompt more residents to invest in the cleaner vehicles.

"If there are stations in convenient locations, it gives (residents) a reason to modify their transportation patterns

in some of the same ways that active transportation has promoted people walking and cycling," he said.

Stevenson said the charging stations would help prepare the city for a rally in Halifax for the E-mazing Race event in May.

The world's longest electrical vehicle race — actually an event to raise funds for further electrical vehicle infrastructure — will make a stop in Halifax the same month as the Electric Mobility Canada conference, bringing more than 300 electrical vehicles to the city.

"There are charging stations in many places for cars to receive the electricity they need," said Stevenson. "One of the areas that require more attention is our own capital city."

In addition to adding charging stations, Stevenson also urged the city to formulate a strategy promoting the use of electric vehicles in order to reduce the impact of fossil fuels.

The committee voted for a staff report investigating ways HRM could support the promotion of electric vehicles.



SUSPECT BACK IN HALIFAX

Christopher Burton Phillips is escorted off the RCMP plane by investigators on Thursday afternoon in Halifax. The Cole Harbour resident was flown back to Nova Scotia from Ottawa and is now facing charges in a rash of chemical scares. See coverage, page 4. JEFF HARPER/METRO



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1 NEWS

Chemical-scare case 'a situation with several unknowns': Police

Christopher Phillips. Authorities say suspect threatened police, but motive still unclear



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The man at the centre of a chemical scare in Nova Scotia arrived back in Halifax on Thursday afternoon, facing charges of threatening to harm police and possession of hazardous chemicals for nefarious purposes.

Christopher Burton Phillips, 42, was arrested in a hotel in Ottawa on Wednesday, after RCMP in Nova Scotia issued a Canada-wide warrant in his name over the discovery of a large quantity of "volatile and hazardous" chemicals in a cottage in Grand Desert and at a residence in Cole Harbour.

Phillips was escorted from Ottawa by police officers on a private charter plane that landed at the Halifax Stanfield International Airport on Thursday shortly after 4:30 p.m., where he was then remanded.

A court date is pending.

Although police have a sus-

Travel to Ottawa

RCMP spokesman Cpl. Greg Church was tight-lipped about why Christopher Phillips was driving to Ottawa, or if he was carrying chemicals with him at the time.

Osmium tetroxide

John Holmes, a professor emeritus of chemistry at the University of Ottawa, said that osmium tetroxide when in fine powder form is hazardous and can cause death by damaging the lungs when inhaled.

- He said the substance can be purchased from large chemical companies but is intended for use in laboratories.

pect in custody, there are still many unanswered questions as to the motive, according to Halifax RCMP spokesman Cpl. Greg Church.

Court documents allege that between Boxing Day 2014 and Wednesday, Phillips threatened police with "bodily harm or death" and during the same time possessed a weapon — osmium tetroxide — "for a purpose dangerous to the public peace" near Cole Harbour.

Church said "one potential scenario" accounting for the range of time could be that Phillips told another person or made plans to cause harm to police, rather than make a direct threat.

"We have here, of course, a situation with several unknowns," Church explained Thursday, saying the investigation remains ongoing and is "fluid."

He said two chemists from Health Canada have joined the members of the hazardous-chemicals unit and explosives-disposal unit who continue



Halifax police continue investigating at a Dyke Road cottage, the source of the chemical scare, on Thursday. JEFF HARPER/METRO

working to identify the mass of chemicals found at a cottage on 95 Dyke Rd. in Grand Desert.

Church said some of the chemicals found in the cottage are labelled in containers, while others are unmarked,

but would not indicate how long the search is expected to last.

Residents in the surround-

ing area were still under an evacuation order, which was expected to last overnight.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Suspect diagnosed with narcissistic personality, addiction to painkillers

The man facing criminal charges after the discovery of a hazardous chemicals cache in Halifax was diagnosed in 2008 with a mood disorder, an addiction to painkillers, an alcohol problem and narcissistic tendencies, court documents show.

The April 2008 report from a Texas psychiatric hospital is among reams of U.S. court documents that also reveal Christopher Phillips once did a short stint in jail and took

methadone to ease the pain of a crippling injury to his feet — something that made it difficult to stand for any length of time, even after seven surgeries.

Documents from his various U.S. court cases fill in some of the blanks surrounding Phillips' past, particularly when it comes to his medical history.

Phillips suffered an undisclosed "traumatic injury" to his feet while in the U.S. navy, which granted him a medical

discharge, say court documents he filed in Washington state in 2011 as part of a lawsuit against a former colleague.

"Phillips is rated as 100 per cent disabled by the military due to a feet condition associated with significant pain," says the document, which Phillips himself wrote. "Phillips also receives additional disability for loss of use of both feet due to pain."

Phillips had a brush with the

law in 2011 when police were called to his home in Renton, Wash. He was charged with providing alcohol to minors, breach of the peace and making a false statement to police. He spent 10 days in the Renton Municipal Jail.

Phillips said the jail time "severely damaged" his relationship with his family — which includes his wife, Gosia, and the couple's young daughter, Klaudia. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Christopher Phillips arrives in Halifax in handcuffs on Thursday. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Conditions

Nearly seven years ago, Phillips was admitted to the Menninger Clinic in Houston.

- His discharge papers show he was diagnosed in April 2008 with a "substance-induced mood disorder," "physiologic opiate dependence," alcohol abuse and narcissistic personality traits.
- The clinic rated Phillips' problems with work, finances, health and his relationship as "severe."

A road map to better parking



A line of cars are shown parked in Halifax in this file photo. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Strategy. City staff lay out \$14.7M project



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City staffers have taken the wraps off a five-year strategy to improve the way parking is managed in Halifax, covering everything from governance to technological upgrades.

Director of planning and infrastructure Jane Fraser told council's transportation standing committee Thursday that among other things, the \$14.7 million plan will respond to a consistent demand from drivers to get rid of parking meters that require the use of small change.

"You seldom have money in your wallet ... having coins to go to a parking meter, it's a challenge for people, to put it mildly," she said.

The changeover from

Quoted

"It's not the intention of the parking road map to come up with a solution for everything. It's a framework that lays the projects out in a logical manner."

Director of planning and infrastructure Jane Fraser

the current coin-eating machines likely won't happen until year two of the plan, in 2016-17.

Projects slated for the first year include GIS mapping of HRM's 3,000 parking spaces in the regional centre, and designating a single city agency to oversee all things parking.

"Under the current system, there is nobody that owns parking," said Fraser. "If there is a parking issue, you literally have to go to five different business units ... to try and get an answer."

Coun. Tim Outhit said the downtown may suffer from a lack of "reliable, affordable, convenient" parking, but questioned the wisdom of spending \$14 million to address that

problem.

"Is it time we say, how much money are we going to spend on improving parking, versus making it easy, convenient, fun for people to get downtown by active or public transportation?" he asked.

Of the estimated total \$14.7 million price tag, \$8.3 million is needed to replace or modernize existing equipment and technology.

Coun. Wayne Mason said that with a return on investment estimated at least \$6 million, the business case looks pretty good.

"You basically get the money back you just put in ... and most of it's paid off within a year to three years, and I think that's great," he said.

Business. Counc. seeks relief from construction

The regional councillor for downtown Halifax has asked the city to investigate possible measures to mitigate the impact of construction and development on local businesses, citing the struggle of some retailers in the downtown core.

"I know that foot traffic to some of these businesses adjacent to these construction sites are down 50 to 60 per cent," Coun. Wayne Mason told the transportation standing committee Thursday. "We're going to see a mass clearing out of downtown if we don't do as much as we can."

Mason tabled a motion asking for a staff report on the mitigation of construction and development impacts on businesses, residents

and pedestrians.

The report will examine everything from coverings for scaffolding to protecting sidewalk accessibility to a standard process of notification for property owners in the event of a road closure.

Mason said the list of seven specific items emerged from a meeting held by Mayor Mike Savage with downtown business owners.

He said six of the seven issues are already being investigated by city staff, but he said the situation is approaching critical.

"My concern is that we put a more formal framework around it and impress on staff the importance of timeline," he said.

RUTH DAVENPORT/METRO

Weather

Potential weekend winter storm brewing

Environment Canada issued a special weather statement for all of Halifax on Thursday over a weekend storm that could hit the province.

The national weather agency said a low pressure system was expected to develop off the American eastern seaboard Saturday and then head toward the Maritimes.

The storm could bring with it the potential for snow, rain, and strong winds on Saturday night and into early Sunday across all of Nova Scotia.

"Environment Canada will continue to monitor the development of this storm providing updates as new information becomes available," the weather statement read.

"Those planning travel or other weather-sensitive activities this weekend are advised to monitor future forecasts for further information."

On Thursday, Environment Canada was calling for snow or rain in Halifax on Saturday with temperatures reaching 2 degrees.

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City Councillor Wayne Mason. JEFF HARPER/METRO

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PC calls Liberal cabinet minister a liar

Nova Star. Taxpayers misled about cost of Maine ferry service, says Opposition member Chris d'Entremont

A key cabinet minister in Nova Scotia has misled the public about how much the government is spending on the money-losing Yarmouth-to-Maine ferry, the Opposition said Thursday.

Progressive Conservative member Chris d'Entremont said Economic Development Minister Michel Samson withheld the fact that the province had spent an additional \$2.5 million on the Nova Star ferry when he was asked about the cost of the service last Thursday.

Samson has since confirmed he has known about the additional spending since Dec. 23.

"To me, that's a lie," d'Entremont said. "If you're going to stand there and stretch the truth or lie, I don't think that's the right way to



The Nova Star is shown coming into Yarmouth last summer. The province's taxpayers have now spent \$28.5 million on the ferry service. YARMOUTH VANGUARD

conduct a government."

Earlier in the day, Samson said he had made a mistake when responding to reporters' questions last week.

"Last Thursday, when I was asked the question of the total amount, I misspoke,"

he said. "It was always our intention ... of making sure that Nova Scotians had all of the information in front of them."

But the minister later altered his explanation. He said he had planned to disclose

the spending, but not until he could make a "package announcement" that included good news about the ferry's pending operating schedule for this year.

"We were under the honest belief that a deal was

mere days away," he said.

But that good news has failed to materialize and Samson did not reveal the information until last Sunday when he issued an unrelated statement about a snafu with an audit of the ferry's costs.

Quoted



"If I could go back, I would do it differently."

Economic Development Minister Michel Samson

Samson has been out of the province since then. He responded to reporters' questions Thursday during a conference call from Orlando, Fla., where he is promoting Cape Breton as a golf destination.

He said no announcement was made when the spending decision was made Dec. 23 because "people would be on holidays and not necessarily following such an update."

The province's taxpayers have now spent \$28.5 million for the ferry service, which includes a \$21-million loan that was spent in the first two months of the inaugural sailing season. That loan that was supposed to last seven years.

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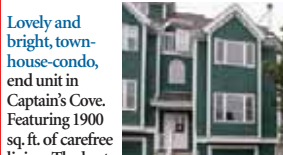
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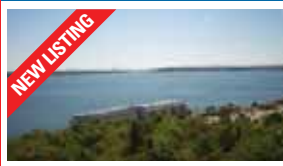
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Jail's closure concerns Amherst lawyer

Cumberland County Correctional Centre. Travelling to Halifax will make it tough for those serving intermittent sentences

A Nova Scotia defence lawyer says the recent closure of the Cumberland County Correc-

tional Centre is going to create havoc with the legal process in the Amherst area and cause problems for those people serving intermittent sentences.

Defence lawyer Jim O'Neil is concerned the recent closure of the county jail will cause delays and other problems with the Amherst-area justice system and all but eliminate intermittent sentences. "It will now be very difficult or impossible for many people to benefit from

intermittent sentencing. The vast majority of persons who receive intermittent sentences do not have substantial criminal records and often it is for impaired driving," O'Neil said.

Prior to the development of intermittent sentencing, if a breadwinner in a household was convicted of impaired driving and incarceration was the sentence, the entire family would suffer the loss of income and often the loss of a job be-

cause the person would have to spend the sentence in jail.

To avoid punishing innocent third parties, O'Neil said, the federal government enacted a regime of intermittent sentencing. A sentence of 90 days or less may be served intermittently, often on the weekends. This provides for the punishment of the wrongdoer, but in such a way that families and children don't suffer.

CUMBERLAND NEWS



Central Nova Correctional Facility in Burnside JEFF HARPER/METRO

Traffic. Woman charged after car hits police wagon

A Halifax woman is facing several charges, including drunk driving, after a collision involving a police wagon in Clayton Park.

According to a release from Halifax Regional Police, the police wagon was parked on the side of the road facing south in the 200 block of Parkland Drive around 2:10 a.m. Thursday while officers were on a call for service.

A Honda Civic rear-ended the wagon, causing minor damage, and then came to a stop. The Civic sustained

"significant" damage, but neither the driver of the vehicle nor the officers in the wagon were hurt.

After a short investigation, a 34-year-old woman was arrested for impaired driving.

She's scheduled to appear in Halifax provincial court to face charges of impaired operation of a motor vehicle and having a blood alcohol level over the legal limit.

She was also ticketed for having no registration or insurance. **METRO**



The damaged police wagon CONTRIBUTED

Nova Scotia

Police investigating after man found dead on highway

The RCMP closed a section of a Nova Scotia highway on Thursday morning after a dead man was located on the roadway.

At about 1:05 a.m. Thursday, RCMP Victoria District and paramedics

responded to a report of an injured person on Highway 105 in the community of Wagmatcook.

Upon arrival, the man was found to be dead.

The highway was closed in both directions until mid-morning as police investigated.

Police are asking anyone with information about the dead man to contact them or Crime Stoppers. **METRO**

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Cat shot in the eye with a pellet gun: RCMP report

Yarmouth. Young animal has been treated at hospital

The RCMP in Nova Scotia are investigating a case of alleged animal cruelty, saying a cat was shot in the eye with a pellet gun.

On Wednesday, the RCMP received a phone call about the incident, which occurred on Tuesday from 5:30 to 6 p.m. Police say the cat does have an owner and resides in the area of the 334 Highway and Surettes Road in Wedgeport, Yarmouth Co.

"Someone called us on behalf of the owner of the

Advice

The RCMP cautions the public to always keep a close eye on their pets and to provide supervision.

cat," said Cpl. Jennifer Clarke.

That friend of the cat's owner, Tara Sollows — who is also involved with the local Friends of Trap, Neuter, Release group as a volunteer and treasurer — posted photos of the feline on the group's Facebook page.

Commenters who viewed the photos and learned of this incident expressed outrage upon seeing an animal hurt like this.

Sollows says the pellet hit the inside corner of the cat's eyelid. The pellet was removed at a local animal hospital.

The cat is believed to be about seven months old.

"There is a criminal charge that would apply, but you would have to prove a couple of things first, so it's not really a set fine, where it is in the Criminal Code," Clarke said.

YARMOUTH VANGUARD

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A cat that was shot by a pellet gun Tuesday. News of the shooting stirred outrage on social media. FACEBOOK

No charges in fatal crash near MacKay Bridge



The accident scene on Feb. 4 on Barrington Street. GEORDON OMAND/FOR METRO

Halifax Regional Police say no charges will be laid in their investigation of an accident last February near the MacKay Bridge that left a man in his 40s dead.

A tractor trailer was driving southbound on Barrington Street when part of the rig became separated from the tractor on the morning commute of Feb. 4, 2014.

Police say the trailer crossed the centre line and crashed head-on into a minivan that was travelling north.

The van's driver, a

Quoted

"We just don't know what exactly happened."

Halifax Regional Police spokesman
Const. Pierre Bourdages

40-year-old man, died at the scene. The driver of the tractor trailer wasn't injured.

Police issued a release Thursday afternoon stating that after a lengthy investigation by their collision unit, they determined the

driver of the tractor trailer was operating the vehicle "in a careful and prudent manner."

They also said the driver "conducted all appropriate safety checks on the rig" prior to going on the road.

The release also noted that the tractor trailer was found to be in compliance with provincial regulations.

"It's a tragic accident ... but nothing that could lead to a charge," said police spokesman Const. Pierre Bourdages in an interview.

"In this case, it took a

very long time because of the complexity of the investigation.... We looked at every aspect."

Bourdages said they brought in people with specific expertise in investigating accidents and also spoke with the Crown, before determining that no charges could be laid.

"What caused the separation hasn't been determined," he said.

Bourdages said the victim's family has been made aware of their findings.

PHILIP CROUCHER/METRO

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Winnipeg named Canada's most racist, mayor pledges 'to turn this ship around'

Racism. The city's citizens have a duty to change how they relate with one another: Mayor

The mayor of Manitoba's capital tearfully promised Thursday to fight racism and intolerance after his city was branded Canada's most racist by a national magazine.

Brian Bowman stood surrounded by dozens of aboriginal and community leaders and admitted Winnipeg has a problem with racism. The city's first Metis mayor broke down as he talked about passing on his heritage to his young children.

"My wife is Ukrainian heritage. My family is Metis," he said as he choked back tears. "I want my boys to be as proud of both of those family lines."

Macleans magazine pub-

lished a cover story that gave Winnipeg the dubious distinction. It cited the huge gap between aboriginals and non-aboriginals, as well as the recent high-profile death of 15-year-old Tina Fontaine, whose body was found in August wrapped in plastic in the Red River.

It also comes shortly after an inquest report into the death of Brian Sinclair, an aboriginal double-amputee who died during a 34-hour wait for care in a city hospital's emergency room in 2008. Some staff testified that they assumed he was drunk or homeless.

The reaction to the article from city hall was swift. The police chief, the provincial treaty commissioner, chiefs and community leaders assembled — not to refute the article — but to promise to do something about the issue it highlighted.

"We do have racism in Winnipeg ... You can't run away from facts," Bowman said following a closed-door traditional



Mayor Brian Bowman speaks about Winnipeg being labelled Canada's most racist city while Grand Chief Derek Nepinak looks on at city hall on Thursday. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

smudging ceremony. "Ignorance, hatred, intolerance, racism exists everywhere.

"Winnipeg has a respon-

sibility right now to turn this ship around and change the way we all relate."

Bowman said that means

having an open dialogue with aboriginal leaders before taking concrete action.

Grand Chief Derek Nepinak

with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs said keeping the lines of communication open is key. But he warned that combating racism is a huge challenge.

"I guarantee you that, right now, somebody is having a racist experience in a restaurant or on the streets in Winnipeg somewhere. I'm not here to pacify that or to say that it's OK," Nepinak said.

"There are people who are wilfully blind, wilfully ignorant to the reality of indigenous people in this society. But we will challenge them."

Winnipeg police Chief Devon Clunis, who is black, said he doesn't believe Winnipeg is the only city grappling with racism. Racism exists across Canada and is part of the "human condition," he suggested.

"We need to have a difficult conversation in our city respective of race," Clunis said. "I think you are seeing who is starting that conversation today." **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Medical concern delays Saudi blogger's flogging

Authorities in Saudi Arabia have postponed the flogging of blogger Raif Badawi for medical reasons, a spokeswoman for the family said Thursday.

Elham Manea told The Canadian Press that local doctors in Jiddah determined Badawi could not withstand the 50 lashes scheduled for Friday.

She added that Badawi's punishment won't likely go ahead for several weeks.

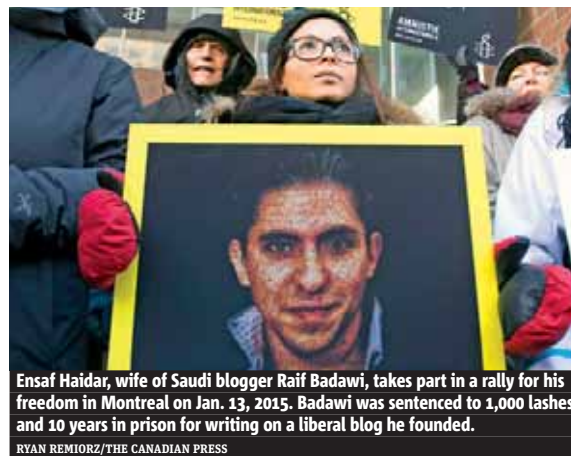
"We are very cautious," Manea said in an interview from Switzerland. "We are very glad to hear this, but at the same time, we are very cautious. We are very worried that, nevertheless, things will change in Saudi Arabia."

Badawi was sentenced to 1,000 lashes and 10 years in prison for writing on a liberal blog he founded. He was also fined more than \$300,000.

The 32-year-old father of three received the first 50 lashes on Jan. 9, but his second set of lashes was postponed last week for medical reasons.

The lashes were scheduled to be doled out over 20 weeks.

"Instead of continuing to torment Raif Badawi by dragging out his ordeal with repeated assessments the authorities should publicly announce an



Ensaf Haidar, wife of Saudi blogger Raif Badawi, takes part in a rally for his freedom in Montreal on Jan. 13, 2015. Badawi was sentenced to 1,000 lashes and 10 years in prison for writing on a liberal blog he founded. RYAN REMIOWZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

end to his flogging and release him immediately and unconditionally," Amnesty International's Said Boumedouha said in a statement.

Badawi is not a Canadian citizen but his wife and three children fled Saudi Arabia in 2012 and settled in Sherbrooke, Que., in 2013.

Protest vigils have been held across Quebec, and in dozens of countries around the world, in solidarity with Badawi.

NDP leader Tom Mulcair sent a letter to Prime Minister

Stephen Harper last week, asking him to speak out in support of the jailed blogger.

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird said "Canada is deeply concerned" by Badawi's punishment, which he described as "a violation of human dignity and freedom of expression."

"While Mr. Badawi is not a Canadian citizen, we will continue to make our position known, both publicly and through diplomatic channels," Baird said in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Refugee claims

Federal project won't be renewed

A government pilot project that essentially paid failed refugee claimants to leave Canada won't be renewed after a scathing internal review. The program was supposed to save time and money when it came to getting failed refugee claimants out of the country — but appears to have done neither. The controversial pilot project gave failed claimants between \$500 and \$2,000 in exchange for their voluntary departure from Canada, and also covered the cost of their plane ticket. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Regina, Sask.

Girl, 3, left on bus, has nightmares

A Regina mother says her three-year-old daughter who was left alone for four hours strapped into a daycare minibus is now suffering from nightmares.

Destiny Stonechild says her child, Sequiona, wakes up screaming every night since the incident occurred on the service bus.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Health. Canadians caring for ill family more stressed

2011 stats

3,728

The commission found that 3,728 Canadians — about 11 out of every 100,000 — killed themselves. The suicide rate, while stable over time, is higher than in some other G8 countries.

Canadians caring for chronically ill older relatives are stressed out at a time when an aging population means more people will require such care, says a new report by the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

The report, released Thursday, also found that suicide rates are higher here than in some other developed nations.

Among those 15 and over who provide care to a family member with a long-term health condition, the report found almost 17 per cent reported higher levels of stress.

The problem is expected to worsen due to increasing rates of dementia and other chronic illnesses, which is why caregiving is among four of 13 mental-health indicators deemed areas of "significant concern" by the commission.

So too are suicide rates, intentional self-harm among college students and mental health recovery.

Nearly 20 per cent of university students said they had engaged in self-harm, the study found.

"There are known strategies that work to prevent suicide; other countries are doing it, like the United Kingdom," Jennifer Vornbrock, a com-

mission official, told a news conference.

Canada should follow suit and invest in suicide prevention, she said.

David Goldbloom, chair of the commission, said some of the indicators "raise significant concerns or indicate that we are moving in the wrong direction. ... We can take little comfort from many of them."

Vornbrock said she hopes the report will underline the need to take mental health more seriously.

She called mental health "the poor cousin of the poor cousin of the health care system."

The federal government created the Mental Health Commission of Canada in 2007. The organization, funded by Health Canada, operates at arm's length and has a 10-year mandate.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Video. Police shooting of black man raises questions

A police video of officers confronting and then fatally shooting a black man in southern New Jersey has raised questions and stirred anger over another death at the hands of police.

The video of the Dec. 30 killing of Jerame Reid in Bridgeton, a struggling, mostly minority city of 25,000 people about 40 miles south of Philadelphia, was released this week.

Conrad Benedetto, a Philadelphia lawyer, said he has been hired by Reid's wife. He said in a statement the footage "raises serious questions as to the legality and/or reasonableness of the officers' actions that night" because Reid was shot as he raised his hands.

With the dashboard camera in their cruiser rolling, police pulled a Jaguar over for running a stop sign on a dark night. But things suddenly turned tense when one of the officers warned his partner that he could see a gun in the glove compartment.

Screaming over and over "Don't you f---ing move!" and "Show me your hands!" at the man in the passenger seat, the

Community relations

2014 was a bad year for relations between police forces and members of black communities in the United States.

- **July 17.** Police chokes 43-year-old Eric Garner to death in Staten Island, New York.
- **Aug. 9.** Police shot and killed 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.
- **Nov. 14.** Police shot and killed 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio.

officer reached into the car and appeared to remove a silver handgun.

Then, the passenger, despite being warned repeatedly not to move, stepped out of the Jaguar, his hands raised about shoulder level.

The officers opened fire, killing him. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**



Charlie Hebdo no hero to Afghan protesters

Afghans hold posters that read, "I love Muhammad," during a protest Thursday against caricatures published in French magazine Charlie Hebdo outside the French embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. Around 100 people have demonstrated in the Afghan capital against Charlie Hebdo, accusing the newspaper of blasphemy.

RAHMAT GUL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Saudi Arabia

Saudi King Abdullah dies

Saudi state TV says King Abdullah, the powerful U.S. ally who joined Washington's fight against al-Qaida and sought to modernize the ultraconservative Muslim kingdom, has died. He was 90. His expected successor is his 79-year-old half-brother, Prince Salman, who had taken on the ailing Abdullah's responsibilities.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ISIL

Japan seeks hostage release

Japan scrambled Thursday for ways to secure the release of two hostages held by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group.

The militants threatened in a video message to kill the hostages within 72 hours unless they receive \$200 million. Based on the video's release time, that deadline would expire some time Friday.

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Media

Jury fails to agree on verdict in trial of U.K. journalists

A British jury has failed to reach a verdict at the trial of four journalists from the tabloid Sun accused of bribing police and public officials for scoops.

Jurors announced Thursday after 49 hours of deliberations that they could not agree on verdicts against head of news Chris Pharo, ex-deputy news editor

Ben O'Driscoll, reporter Jamie Pyatt and former managing editor Graham Dudman. Prosecutors said they would seek a retrial.

Many senior journalists from Rupert Murdoch-owned newspapers have been arrested as part of a sprawling probe into alleged tabloid wrongdoing. Several have been acquitted, including former Sun editor Rebekah Brooks.

The defendants denied all charges and claimed they were "fed to the wolves" by parent company News International.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carlsberg developing wood fibre beer bottle

If you're a Carlsberg beer drinker, you might soon have to get used to toasting without that familiar "clink."

The alcohol giant announced Thursday that it is in the process of developing a biodegradable bottle made of wood fibres, meaning there won't be any sound when you touch bottles before throwing back a cold one.

Though the Green Fiber Bottle won't replace Carlsberg's aluminum or glass varieties, it could face criticism from diehard beer lovers who have become accustomed to the sound.

It's a problem Carlsberg faced when it introduced a polyethylene terephthalate bottle in Sweden, said the company's spokesman, Simon Hoffmeyer Boas.



Carlsberg is using an infographic to promote its Green Fiber Bottle.

CONTRIBUTED

Kenneth Wong, a marketing professor at Queen's University, said he's not sure how many brew lovers will be heartbroken over the clink, but "certainly it will be a factor." He noted that the bottle announcement came as companies are pouring their efforts into generating buzz and cultivating buyers to offset declines

in beer sales.

"This is one more turn of the wheel," Wong said. "Whether or not it works is another story."

Steve Beauchesne, CEO and co-founder of Beau's All Natural Brewing Co., a craft brewery in Vankleek Hill, Ont., said Carlsberg isn't the first to use innovative packaging materials that stretch beyond glass and aluminum. Beau's sells beer in ceramic bottles with a swing top and packages them in a wooden crate.

Beauchesne says companies are getting creative because "beer is not just about the liquid," but also the experience.

As for Carlsberg's effort, that'll be a three-year process. So far, only prototypes have been developed.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mobile users wait for better battery

Smartphones. Companies offering workarounds for red-zone anxiety

At a watering hole in Brooklyn, bartender Kathy Conway counted four phone chargers behind the bar. Smartphone users, facing the scourge of the red zone, are tired of begging to charge devices behind bars or hunting for hidden electrical outlets in airports and train stations and are looking for a better battery.

While a better battery is a long way off, there are some options to ward off battery anxiety.

Companies displayed battery chargers and smartphone extenders at the annual gadget show known as CES. One that seems particularly convenient is the 911 Boost, developed by Florida entrepreneur Bernard Emano and his two firefighter sons. The small square weighs only 65 grams and is designed to be carried on a key chain. It's versatile, with three retractable jacks so it can plug into new and old model iPhones, and any phone that takes a micro-USB plug. The \$30 US device can only provide about a 60 per cent charge for most phones, though a battery with more capacity would be too heavy for a keychain.

Chinese company ZeroLemon has a line of rugged smartphone cases for Apple, Samsung and LG phones that come with built-in battery extenders. A \$69 US version for the iPhone 6, called the Rugged Juicer, will let you go up to three times as long



Travellers, like these at McCarran airport in Las Vegas, have to hunt to find a charging station as their power-hungry mobile devices put a strain on the common lithium-ion batteries. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Power hogs

The capacity of the common lithium-ion battery that powers laptops, cellphones and tablet computers has tripled since 1990. But that's not nearly enough to keep up with the demand gadget addicts have for constant use of skinny, light mobile devices that limit battery size.

- Two billion mobile phones were shipped worldwide in 2014, 75 per cent of which were smartphones. Demand is growing by 10 to 12 per cent each year.

Qualcomm has extended battery life through more efficient software and hardware: When one part of the chipset is in use, the rest gets turned off to save energy. The chipset also tries to store a lot of data internally so that it doesn't have to expend energy constantly reaching out to the phone's memory banks.

Google, whose Android operating system runs on most of the world's smartphones, last year launched Project Volta, a tool aimed at extending mobile battery life.

Waking up a phone's application processor, for example, can start consuming a lot of power, but a lot of apps don't need to do that constantly. A function called JobScheduler helps ensure that apps wait to perform non-critical tasks like updates when your phone is not connected to a power source.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

before you need a recharge. ZeroLemon also makes pocket-sized, solar chargers that will restore a battery to full capacity in about three hours.

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THE KOHLER REPORT

By Rebecca Kohler

A Winnipeg court will soon decide whether a mother is guilty of child abandonment after leaving her six-year-old son at home alone for 90 minutes while she did some errands. A guilty verdict would set a precedent and could mean leaving children alone would go from a common sense no-no to absolutely illegal.

To me, six does seem a young age to be man-of-the-house for an hour and a half — when I was six, I wouldn't have left me in charge of Silly Putty, let alone a household — but then again, I've met precocious six-year-olds who seemed smarter than some of my ex-boyfriends.

And just over 100 years ago, children as young as four were working in factories to help with the family income; true, laws were created to stop that because it was dangerous and cruel, but if a four-year-old can sweep a chimney, maybe we don't give kids enough credit today.

You may have heard of a similar case in the news recently regarding Maryland, Va., parents Danielle and Alexander Meitiv, who let their 10-

and six-year-old children walk a mile home alone from a park. A concerned citizen saw the unsupervised children and called police. The Meitivs are now under investigation for being negligent parents.

In interviews, the Meitivs come across as the opposite of negligent, they seem thoughtful and dedicated to giving their children the best possible childhood — the kind of childhood they had.

They're advocates of what's called "free-range parenting" and, though it sounds like they're raising chickens, the movement is actually about raising your kids to be self-reliant and independent by letting them do things — like walk home from the park — by themselves.

Free-range parenting makes a lot of sense to me as I wonder if news stories and crime shows about abductions have people paralyzed with what might be an irrational fear.

As Danielle Meitiv put it during an interview on the Today Show, these days maybe we're "overestimating the danger and underestimating our children."

If you're any older than 30, I'll bet you got away with a lot more than kids do today.

Overstating the risk

Free-range parenting makes a lot of sense to me as I wonder if news stories and crime shows about abductions have people paralyzed with what might be an irrational fear.

I was biking around my neighbourhood at 10 — no helmet, as helmets were for nerds only — I walked to the corner store for Popsicles, played with friends at the park.

Looking back, I don't see my parents as negligent. I thank them for giving me the space to learn for myself that roller-skating down a hill is not a great idea.

It's not clear whether the Winnipeg mother identifies as a "free-ranger" or was just trying to make do in a busy life, as not a lot of information has been released about her.

What has been reported is that her son is now living with his father and she hasn't seen him in 18 months, which seems extreme.

Maybe there's more to the story: Maybe she's known to be irresponsible with her son, maybe she considers Play-Doh a food group, and maybe the way the courts are treating her is based on more than just this one incident. Or maybe they're being helicopter courts?

Danielle Meitiv also pointed out that letting her kids walk home from the park is not only good for their health in terms of exercise, but the No. 1 cause of childhood death is car accidents — in her mind, having them walk home alone is actually safer than driving them.

This might sound like hippy-dippy bologna to you but statistically speaking, she's right — I checked.

So if it's the safety of the children we're all concerned about and we look at the statistics, maybe every parent that drives their kids places should be investigated for negligence?

Or maybe today we're not giving the children or the parents enough credit.

Rebecca Kohler is a stand-up comic, writer, actor, gymnast, lawyer and chemist. (Some of this isn't true.) Follow her on Twitter at @becca_kohler

Happy face/Sad face

From intellectual garden gnomes to dancing wee-wees and hooahas, Metro weighs in on the news that made headlines this week:



CRAZED HOCKEY PARENTS

Parents on Vancouver Island have gotten a one-game suspension and a stern warning from the local hockey association. Parents were told in a letter that if they don't stop their "vindictiveness" toward youth refs, they'll be banned from watching any games. The verbal abuse has apparently gotten so bad that some of refs have taken to hiding in the change rooms. Look —when teenagers are locking themselves up to get away from you (and these teenagers are not your own kids) you have a problem.



GNOME CHOMSKY

Thanks to Just Say Gnome sculptor Steve Herrington and the Internet, you can now have your very own Noam Chomsky garden gnome to proudly display on your lawn. The miniature statues have been around for more than a decade, but due to the mysterious magic of the Internet, they've suddenly become popular enough to be on the radar of this national newspaper and we can tell you about them.



BIRTHDAY PARTY DRAMA MOMMA

This week in passive-aggressive parenting: A woman in England sent five-year-old Alex home with a £15 invoice after he failed to show up to her son's birthday party. When Alex's father refused to pay the bill, Jennifer Lawrence allegedly threatened to take him to small-claims court. This woman seems like she should take a lesson or two from her more famous namesake on the art of being chill. Grab a slice of leftover cake and try to relax.



DANCING GENITALS GO VIRAL

The Swedes do it again, crafting yet another near-perfect pop tune. Instant classic Snoppen Och Snippan is aimed at kids and performed by cartoon genitals, who sing about how great private parts are. While a few parents complained they didn't think the song was age-appropriate, others thought the song reinforces stereotypes about boys and girls. We say it's hard to think about gender politics while listening to a tune this catchy. Snippe-dippe snippetty snop!



CONFESSIONS OF A LAZY MAILMAN

Sometimes, 'going postal' just means feeling sluggish enough that you end up not doing your job very well. A former U.S. Postal Service worker pleaded guilty this week for failing to deliver close to 1,000 pieces of mail. 27-year-old Alex Douma explained to investigators that he "just got lazy." Not cool, Douma, but we value your honesty!





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Depp's rebel days are long gone

Mortdecai. New role as a bumbling British art dealer is the latest in a string of box-office-friendly characters that are damaging his rep as an edgy actor

There are dozens of biographies on Johnny Depp and a surprising amount of them use the word "rebel" in the title. There's the *Passionate Rebel*, the *Modern Rebel* and even Hollywood's *Best-Loved Rebel*.

There can be no argument that Depp is a fearless actor, unafraid to tackle tough, challenging roles, but it's hard to accept the rebel title these days. For 20 years, he wildly threw darts at the wall, making exciting movies with interesting directors.

With Tim Burton, he created the off-kilter Eds — Wood and Scissorhands. With John Waters, he produced Wade Walker, the greaser love interest in *Cry-baby*. And, with Lasse Hallström, he came up with Gilbert Grape, caregiver to his brother and morbidly obese mother.

Along the way, he was also Hunter S. Thompson in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, the world's most successful drug dealer in *Blow*, and the depraved poet at the dark heart of *The Libertine*.

Few actors could have pulled off Ed Wood and no one does debauched like Johnny, but the carefully cultivated hip outsider image was never truly accurate.

Shrouded in a cloud of Gauloise smoke, he was one



Johnny Depp plays a shady, moustachioed art dealer in *Mortdecai*. CONTRIBUTED

In Focus

RICHARD CROUSE



of Hollywood's too-cool-for-school kids, emitting an outsider's aura, while astutely playing the Hollywood game.

But any remaining traces of Depp's bohemian status were wiped away with Captain Jack Sparrow's colourful scarves in the tetralogy of *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies. They made him a superstar, and wealthy enough to buy Bahamian islands, but also ushered in the damaging wig and makeup era of his career.

The pale makeup of *Dark Shadows*, *Alice* in

Wonderland's crazy oversized hat, and the raven headdress of *The Lone Ranger* overshadowed Depp's performances, obscuring his character work with props and flash.

This weekend, he hides behind a moustache in the comedy *Mortdecai*.

As the title character, he's pompous, bumbling — imagine Inspector Clouseau with an English accent and an attitude — and on a worldwide hunt for a painting said to contain the code to a lost bank account.

Will people be attracted to *Mortdecai*? Hard to know. Depp's showy performances have, by-and-large, garnered

Richard's ratings

Here Metro curates some quick Crouse takes on films currently unspooling at theatres across the country.

Still Alice

.....

Strange Magic

.....

Cake

.....

The Humbling

.....

The Boy Next Door

.....

big box office but profitability, while important to the suits who green light projects like this, is exactly what's killing Depp's credibility as a serious actor.

He's not in Nicolas Cage territory yet — there's an actor whose Western Kabuki style of acting redefines idiosyncratic — but with *Pirates of the Caribbean 5* coming soon, perhaps it's time to put Depp's rebel actor image or reliance on props to bed.

There were no press screenings for *Mortdecai*, so there is no rating from Richard. See inside for early reviews from Rotten Tomatoes.

2 SCENE

Playtime was never this fun

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Pushing boundaries empowers Lopez

Movie feature.

Steamy new thriller challenges J-Lo's skills as an actress and as an independent producer



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Metro in Hollywood

Jennifer Lopez would be having a lot more fun making a rom-com, but then work can't always be fun, can it?

Her latest film, the steamy thriller *The Boy Next Door*, is pretty far from lighter fare like *The Wedding Planner* or *The Back-Up Plan*.

Lopez stars as an English teacher who succumbs to the advances of her neighbour's comely young nephew (Ryan Guzman). As you can imagine, it doesn't go well from there.

Now, back to that fun factor part of the job.

"I prefer romantic comedies. They're just fun. That's a fun set," Lopez admits. "You're just seeing how silly you can



Jennifer Lopez stars in and produced *The Boy Next Door*. CONTRIBUTED

make things. They're romantic, and I'm a hopeless romantic, as well. So I really enjoy doing that kind of stuff."

But she insists she also likes to push herself.

"Being more dramatic or being more tough or being more vulnerable, it's all the

same. It's all about trying to find the reality in the moment, making it real. All of a sudden, I have this high-pitched scream that I've never heard myself do, and that's when I know I'm tapping into something real."

Another challenge with her

Boy Next Door role was the extremely intimate sex scene that sets the craziness of the plot in motion — and required some bold, revealing work on Lopez's part.

"Scenes like that are always uncomfortable," she says. "It's a very vulnerable position to

The cute boy next door

So how much does art imitate life for Lopez?

"Actually, my first boyfriend was the boy next door, when I was like 13 or 14 years old. It was the summer I turned 14. He was cute. Cute enough, I guess, at the time."

But he didn't become a deranged stalker?

"I've had people kind of obsessed with me, but not like obsessed in a dangerous, scary way. No, thank God. I've never had to deal with anything like that."

passionate, real enough, then the rest of the movie doesn't make any sense."

Acting challenges aside, the movie also taught Lopez some lessons as a producer, particularly in the new rules of financing and independent filmmaking.

"We got it made on a micro-budget of \$4 million in 25 days," she reveals. "It was super-intense. I had never done a film like that in my career. But it was very liberating as an artist because it made me realize I can make whatever movie I want like this. It's the material that really matters. 'Do I feel like doing this at this time?' and not waiting for a big studio to green-light something or hire you as an actress. It really is very empowering."

So is that why she was absent from the big screen in 2014? Not quite.

"For me, it's just about what feels right at the time, and I was very in music land last year," she explains. "I'm always thinking about all of it, and then certain things take precedent at different times."

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No need to be afraid of me, Ryan Guzman assures fans

Breakout role. Despite his scary character in *The Boy Next Door*, actor insists he's just a harmless little guy

Fans of *Pretty Little Liars* and the *Step Up* films are already familiar with Ryan Guzman, but with this weekend's *The Boy Next Door*, a lot more people are going to get a look at Guzman — a lot of him, in fact. Here's an introduction:

He's not tired of cookies:

"Everybody wants to know when they see me in real life, they look at me a little differently. Until they actually start talking to me and realize that I'm just harmless little Ryan Guzman, there's a lot of people that are a little standoffish at first."

He's heard how audiences react to the film:

"So far, I've heard someone yell, 'Replay!' after the intimate sex scene."

He's sorry for freaking anyone out in real life: "People



Ryan Guzman plays a frightening stalker in *The Boy Next Door*.

get extremely scared by Noah Sandborn, so much so that when they see me in real life, they look at me a little differently. Until they actually start talking to me and realize that I'm just harmless little Ryan Guzman, there's a lot of people that are a little standoffish at first."

He knows where to look for inspiration:

"I definitely have plenty of actors that I look up to, like Marlon Brando or Tom Hardy, Christian Bale. And Mark Wahlberg, his business savvy and how he came up. I

actually used Mark Wahlberg's Fear performance as something to base Noah Sandborn on in the beginning."

He knows his limitations:

"The one thing I struggle with, if I'm being honest, is being the romantic hero — the protagonist that's lovey-dovey and says all the right things. I have the hardest time with those. I don't look at myself as a guy who can get any woman he wants or says all the right things. I look at myself as an idiot. I look at myself as a goofball." **NED EHRBAR**

10 Sundance hopefuls to watch for

Film festival. If you're wondering why Robert Redford's indie showcase still matters, check out these contenders

NED EHRBAR
Metro in Hollywood

If this year's Oscar nominations are any indication, talk of the Sundance Film Festival's waning relevance is shockingly premature. Two films that stood out in Park City last year — *Boyhood* and *Whiplash* — are two of the stronger Academy Award front-runners this year. So with a whole new crop of hopeful Sundance darlings ready to premiere, here's a look at some of the titles we're most excited about.

1. *Stanford Prison Experiment*

It's honestly surprising it's taken this long for this story — about one of the most infamous psychological studies in history — to make it to the screen. Kyle Patrick Alvarez (C.O.G.) directs an impressive cast including Ezra Miller, Billy Crudup, Tye Sheridan, James Wolk and Michael Angarano.

2. *I Am Michael*

If you see only one James Franco movie at Sundance this year — and, as usual, there are multiple — see this one. Franco stars in director Justin Kelly's real-life drama as Michael Glatze, a gay activist who becomes an ex-gay Christian pastor.

3. *Slow West*

The Sundance's first sale of the year has already happened, even before the festival started. Kodi Smit-McPhee (*The Road*) stars alongside Michael Fassbender and Ben Mendelsohn in this 19th century frontier drama about a young man searching for the woman he loves with some interesting company along for the ride.

4. *Z for Zachariah*

Compliance director Craig Zobel follows up that lightning rod of a film with the story of a love triangle — that just so happens to involve the three last people on earth in a post-apocalyptic future. Oh, and those three people happen to be Chiwetel Ejiofor, Chris Pine and Margot Robbie. Humanity could do worse.

5. *People, Places, Things*

There are plenty of examples this year of comic performers turning to Sundance films for a chance to stretch — in-



Slow West was Sundance's first sale, selling even before the film festival started. CONTRIBUTED



Greta Gerwig, left, co-wrote and stars in *Mistress America*. CONTRIBUTED



Stanford Prison Experiment. CONTRIBUTED

cluding two by festival regular Kristen Wiig, plus Sarah Silverman in *I Smile Back* — but the most intriguing is *Flight of the Conchords* star Jemaine Clement taking on the role of a widower with two young daughters.

6. *Last Days in the Desert*

Since the list of things Ewan McGregor hasn't done yet in his eclectic acting career apparently included playing Jesus Christ and the Devil, he decided

to knock them both out with one movie, chronicling Christ's 40-day exile and temptation. Yes, it's ground that's been covered on film before, but it's intriguing nonetheless.

7. *Mistress America*

Noah Baumbach and his girlfriend/star/co-writer/muse, Greta Gerwig look to recapture some of that Frances Ha magic with another story of young women in New York. Sounds like a plan.



James Franco, left, is an ex-gay Christian pastor in *I Am Michael*. CONTRIBUTED

8. *End of the Tour*

Director James Ponsoldt follows up *The Spectacular Now* with this retelling of the five-day-long interview between David Foster Wallace (Jason Segel) and Rolling Stone reporter David Lipsky (Jesse Eisenberg). This could be catnip for the NPR crowd.

9. *A Walk in the Woods*

It kind of seems like cheating for festival founder Robert Redford to appear in a film at Sundance, but it's probably

best to not ignore him. Redford and Nick Nolte co-star as aging pals hiking the Appalachian Trail in this film, which kicks off the festival as the opening night gala.

10. *Going Clear*

There are also a ton of interesting documentaries, but if you only have time for one, make it Alex Gibney's already controversial Scientology take-down, featuring eight not-so-happy former Church members.

JOHNNY DEPP GWYNETH PALTROW EWAN MCGREGOR

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Comedy



Nicolas Cage GETTY IMAGES

Nicolas Cage to go after Bin Laden in Army of One

Actor Nicolas Cage has joined the latest comedy from Borat director Larry Charles, *The Hollywood Reporter* indicates. *Army of One* is inspired by an article published in *GQ* on one American's attempts to go on a manhunt for the Al-Qaeda leader in Pakistan and Afghanistan. After a series of critical and commercial missteps, Nicolas Cage has decided to make his next film a satirical comedy, likely of the black humour variety. **AFP**

Script development

Write me up, Scotty: Simon Pegg will help pen Star Trek 3

Along with *Dark Blue* creator Doug Jung, British writer and actor Simon Pegg will co-author the script of the third movie in the *Star Trek* reboot. Deadline has revealed.

Though not exactly anticipated, Simon Pegg's arrival on the *Star Trek 3* production team is not entirely surprising. A known fan of all things sci-fi, the writer and director of the 2005 zombie comedy *Shaun of the Dead* is a friend of J.J. Abrams, who directed the first two movies in the franchise, released in 2009 and 2013. Pegg also appeared in both as Scotty, a role he is set to reprise in the third movie. **AFP**

Sniper targets conservative crowd

Marketing. Iraq War drama has brought in a demographic that movies seldom cater to

Empty seats were hard to come by at Clint Eastwood's *American Sniper* over the U.S. holiday weekend, where the R-rated Iraq War drama — all words seldom attached to “blockbuster” — rolled to the kind of runaway success that makes Hollywood sit up and take notice.

The film, which blew away box-office expectations with a superhero-sized \$107 million US over the four-day weekend, was in many ways an old-fashioned kind of Hollywood hit: It was built on star-power (Bradley Cooper and Eastwood), Oscar buzz (6 nominations including best picture) and a largely adult audience (63 per cent over 25 years old).

The success has made the latest film from the 84-year-old director (his second in half a year) a flashpoint in Hollywood, Washington D.C. and everywhere in between, sweeping *American Sniper* into the culture wars Eastwood has sometimes engaged.

Bradley Cooper in a scene from *American Sniper*. CONTRIBUTED

Certainly, the wide-release opening wouldn't have been possible without the strong support of a seldom-catered-to demographic: conservatives. Dan Fellman, head of domestic distribution for Warner Bros., called conservatives' embrace of the film “huge,” noting it's an audience difficult to court.

“The audience watched this movie not as a war movie but as a movie about patriotism, a

movie about a hero, a movie about family, a movie about serving our country,” said Fellman. “And it struck a chord right across the board.”

Most Hollywood heartland hits (like the recent *Unbroken*, or one of films *American Sniper* surpassed to become the biggest R-rated drama debut, *The Last Temptation of Christ*) have capitalized on faith-based audiences. But *American Sniper*,

about Navy SEAL marksman Chris Kyle, is the kind of heroic war film Hollywood has largely resisted depicting because of the often unpopular and less successful campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Gitesh Pandya, editor of *BoxOfficeGuru.com*, credited the film's triumph to a “perfect storm” of factors, including the savvy marketing of Warner Bros., which stoked interest in

the film by holding it in very limited release for two weeks.

“It was always expected to have a large conservative base come out for this film, as most military dramas do,” said Pandya. “But you can't sell a movie to only a conservative audience and reach \$107 million in a four-day weekend. You're reaching everybody with those kind of numbers.”

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Still Alice captures off-screen bond between stars

Chemistry. Kristen Stewart and Julianne Moore have been close for years, so playing mother and daughter was not a stretch

Kristen Stewart didn't need to stretch herself into actorly knots to feel a familial bond with Julianne Moore in *Still Alice*.

She had known Moore, who became a five-time Oscar nominee with her recent nod for *Alice*, since her first starring role in 2004's *Catch That Kid*, which was directed by Moore's

husband Bart Freundlich. That shoot was “very much a family affair,” Stewart says, and she grew close enough to Moore that acting as her daughter in *Still Alice* felt almost too easy.

“It's hard to take credit for anything ... because I like her, and because we get along and we understand each other — and that was captured,” Stewart

“As an actor ... you can't work with everyone, to be honest with you. The reason things affect an audience ... is because an emotion and energy like that is contagious, so if you're faking it, people know it.”

“For a project that's so ambitious and so intimidating,” she added, “I needed to know I would help and support her

Kristen Stewart, left, and Julianne Moore in *Still Alice*. CONTRIBUTED

rather than take away from what she's doing.”

In the disquieting drama, Moore portrays a renowned linguistics professor whose charmed life is brought to abrupt ruin with the diagnosis

of early-onset Alzheimer's disease. Rapidly, the astute academic begins vanishing into the mysterious condition while her husband (Alec Baldwin) and three grown children stand by in helpless terror.

As aspiring actress Lydia, the 24-year-old Stewart portrays a character who is both at odds with her mother (over the daughter's refusal to go to college) and yet her closest confidante. She's the only family member brave enough to face her mother's deteriorating state head-on.

Stewart, so closely associated with the blockbuster *Twilight* film franchise, has won critical regard for her *Still Alice* performance. The *New York Times* praised her “excellent work” in the film, and the *L.A. Times* concluded that the film “wouldn't be nearly as emotionally effective as it is” without Stewart's presence.

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Why Cumming thinks it's OK to give kids a scare

Interview. Strange Magic's voice of the villain says there's a fear factor in most children's tales

RICHARD CROUSE
scene@metronews.ca

Strange Magic, a new animated jukebox musical fantasy from George Lucas, follows in the footsteps of Peter Pan, Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella. All are musicals, all are for kids and all feature a villain geared to make young pulses race.

"I do think we underestimate how much darkness kids can deal with," says Alan Cumming, who plays the film's chief baddie, the Bog King.

Inspired by A Midsummer Night's Dream, Strange Magic is set in a fairy world where you can never judge a book by its cover.

Cumming's character, with his glowing eyes and a skeleton that is more exo than endo, certainly embodies the movie's message that beauty is only skin deep.

"All these kinds of films are based on a tradition that goes way, way back to the Grimm Brothers," says Cumming.

"In a way, the reason these stories are told is to teach kids some sort of moral lesson. You have to scare people but ultimately show that he has a nicer side to him."

Lucas, who has a 'story by' and producer credit on the film says, "with the Bog King we did tone

him down a bit because it is a delicate balance. We've shown it to a lot of kids and most of them aren't affected by it at all. My daughter, who is only 18 months, saw the trailer with the Bog King in it on a screen, not on a TV and she wasn't moved by it at all. But of course 18-month-olds aren't afraid of anything yet.

"Kids are not as fragile as you think they are. All the stuff, that it warps their brains, I'm not sure about that," he said.

"There is a certain reality to imitative violence, which is monkey see, monkey do, and that is dangerous, but at the same time a well brought up kid doesn't fall into that."

Lucas, who has been working on this project on and off for 15 years — "I liked to do it in between working on Star Wars and writing scripts and things"— says there are only three moments in the movie that are "bothersome."

"It has been my experience with my kids that if you sense something coming up you just put your hand over their eyes and usually they're faster at doing it than you are."



Alan Cumming voices the Bog King in Strange Magic, which opens this weekend. CONTRIBUTED

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Alan Cumming
GETTY IMAGES

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Mystery



The Boy Next Door

Director. Neill Fearnley, Rob Cohen

Stars. Jennifer Lopez, Ryan Guzman


Jennifer Lopez leads the cast in The Boy Next Door, a psychological thriller that explores a forbidden attraction that goes much too far. Directed by Rob Cohen (The Fast and the Furious) and written by Barbara Curry, the film also stars Ryan Guzman, John Corbett and Kristin Chenoweth.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 29%

Audience: 90%

Animation



Strange Magic

Director. Gary Rydstrom


Strange Magic is a madcap fairy tale musical inspired by A Midsummer Night's Dream. Popular songs from the past six decades help tell the tale of a colorful cast of goblins, elves, fairies and imps, and their hilarious misadventures sparked by the battle over a powerful potion.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 13%

Audience: 85%

Action



Mortdecai

Director. David Koepf

Stars. Johnny Depp, Gwyneth Paltrow


Juggling some angry Russians, the British Mi5, his impossibly leggy wife and an international terrorist, debonair art dealer and part time rogue Charlie Mortdecai (Johnny Depp) must traverse the globe armed only with his good looks and special charm in a race to recover a stolen painting rumored to contain the code to a lost bank account filled with Nazi gold.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 9%

Audience: 92%

Comedy



The Wedding Ringer

Director. Jeremy Garelick

Stars. Josh Gad, Kevin Hart


Doug Harris (Josh Gad) is a lovable but socially awkward groom-to-be with a problem: He has no best man. With less than two weeks to go until he marries the girl of his dreams (Kaley Cuoco-Sweeting), Doug is referred to Jimmy Callahan (Kevin Hart), owner and CEO of Best Man, Inc., a company that provides flattering best men for socially challenged guys in need. What ensues is a hilarious wedding charade.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 33%

Audience: 77%

Comedy



Paddington

Director. Paul King

Stars. Nicole Kidman, Hugh Bonneville


From the beloved novels by Michael Bond and producer David Heyman (Harry Potter), Paddington tells the story of the comic misadventures of a young Peruvian bear (voiced by Firth) who travels to the city in search of a home. Finding himself lost and alone, he begins to realize that city life is not all he had imagined — until he meets the kindly Brown family.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 96%

Audience: 87%

Action/Adventure



Taken 3

Director. Olivier Megaton

Stars. Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace

Liam Neeson returns as ex-covert operative Bryan Mills, whose reconciliation with his ex-wife is tragically cut short when she is brutally murdered. Consumed with rage, and framed for the crime, he goes on the run to evade the relentless pursuit of the CIA, FBI and the police. For one last time, Mills must use his “particular set of skills,” to track down the real killers.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 31%

Audience: 96%

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., JAN. 23 TO THURS., JAN. 29. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Bayers Lake, 190 Chain Lake

American Sniper (STC) Fri-Sat 12:45-3:45 6:45-9:45 Sun 12:15-3:10-6:05-9:30 Mon-Thu 12:15-3:15-6:15-9:15
American Sniper: The IMAX Experience (STC) Fri-Sat 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15 Sun-Thu 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:45
Annie (G) Fri 12:50 Sat 11:10-12:50 Sun-Thu 12:20
Big Hero 6 (G) Fri 12:20-6:10 Sat 11:30-12:20-6:10 Sun 11:50-5:40 Mon-Thu 12:10-5:40
Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance) (STC) Fri-Sat 12:10-3:30-6:40-10:10 Sun 11:40-3-6:10-9:40 Mon-Thu 12:10-3-6:10-9:40
Blackhat (STC) Fri-Sat 12:35-4-6:55-9:55 Sun 12:05-3:30-6:25-9:25 Mon-Thu 12:35-3:30-6:25-9:25
The Boy Next Door (STC) Fri-Sat 1-3:20-5:40-8-10:20 Sun-Thu 12:30-2:50-5:10-7:30-9:50 Star & Strollers Screening, Wed 11
The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (PG) Fri-Sat 12:55-4:35 Sun-Thu 12:25-4:05
The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 7:50 Sun-Thu 7:20
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 1 (PG) Fri-Sat 4:20-7:20-10:05 Sun-Thu 3:50-6:50-9:35
The Imitation Game (STC) Fri-Sat 12:25-3:50-6:30-9:50 Sun 11:55-3:20-6-9:20 Mon-Thu 12:25-3:20-6-9:20
Into the Woods (PG) Fri-Sat 12:05-3-6-9:35 Sun 11:35-2:30-5:30-9:05 Mon-Wed 12-2:50-5:40-9:05 Thu 12-2:50
Monster House (PG) Sat 11
Mortdecai (STC) Fri-Sat 2:25-5-7:45-10:30 Sun-Thu 1:55-4:30-7:15-10
Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (PG) Fri-Sat 12 Sun 11:30 Mon-Thu 1:50

Paddington (STC) Fri 1:45-2-4:05-6:25-9:30 Sat 11:20-1:45-2-4:05-6:25-9:30 Sun-Thu 1:15-1:30-3:35-5:55-9
Project Almanac (STC) Thu 7-9:30
Selma (PG) Fri-Sat 12:15-3:25-6:20-9:40 Sun 11:45-2:55-5:50-9:10 Mon-Thu 12:15-3-5:50-9:10
Strange Magic (STC) Fri-Sat 12-2:30-5-7:30-10:15 Sun 11:30-2-4:30-7-9:45 Mon-Thu 2-4:30-7-9:45 Star & Strollers Screening, Wed 11
Taken 3 (14) Fri-Sat 2:20-4:55-7:35-10:05 Sun 1:50-4:25-7:05-9:35 Mon-Thu 4:25-7:05-9:35
The Theory of Everything (PG) Fri-Sat 3:15-5:30 Sun-Thu 2:45-9
Unbroken (14) Fri-Sat 4-7-10 Sun 3:30-6:30 Mon-Thu 3:30-6:30-9:30
The Wedding Ringer (STC) Fri-Sat 12:40-3:10-5:35-8:10-10:30 Sun 12:10-2:40-5:05-7:40-10 Mon-Thu 12:15-2:40-5:05-7:40-10
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The Imitation Game (STC) Fri 7-9:45 Sat-Sun 4-7-9:45 Mon-Thu 7-9:45

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American Sniper (STC) Fri-Sat 12:40-3:40-6:45-9:45 Sun 12:40-3:40-6:30-9:30 Mon-Thu 3:30-6:30-9:30
Bolshoi Ballet: Swan Lake (STC) Sun 1:55
The Boy Next Door (STC) Fri-Sat 1:15-4:10-7:25-10:10 Sun 1:15-4:10-7:25-9:55 Mon-Thu 4:10-7:25-9:55
Cake (STC) Fri-Sun 12:50-3:25-7:10-9:35 Mon-Tue 3:40-7:10-9:35 Wed 3:40-7-9:35 Thu 3:40-7:10-9:35
Exhibition OnScreen: Girl With a Pearl

Earring (STC) Wed 7:30
Inherent Vice (14) Fri-Sat 9:20 Sun-Thu 9:15
Mortdecai (STC) Fri-Sat 1:10-3:50-6:55-9:30 Sun 1:10-3:50-6:55-9:25 Mon-Thu 3:50-6:50-9:20
Paddington (STC) Fri-Sat 12:55-3:20-6:35-9:10 Sun 12:55-3:20-6:35-9 Mon-Thu 3:35-6:35-9
Taken 3 (14) Fri-Sat 12:30-3:15-6:30 Sun 6:40 Mon-Tue 3:55-6:40 Wed 3:55 Thu 3:55-6:40
The Wedding Ringer (STC) Fri-Sat 1:20-4:15-7:15-9:50 Sun 1:20-4:15-7:15-9:45 Mon-Thu 4:15-7:15-9:50
Wild (14) Fri-Sat 1-4-7-10 Sun 1-4-7-9:50 Mon-Tue 4-7-9:45 Wed 4-6:35-9:45 Thu 4-7-9:45

Lower Sackville 760 Sackville Dr.

American Sniper (STC) Fri 6:30-9:35 Sat-Sun 12:15-3:15-6:30-9:35 Mon-Thu 6:30-9:35
Blackhat (STC) Fri 6:20-9:15 Sat-Sun 12-3-6:20-9:15 Mon-Thu 6:20-9:15
The Boy Next Door (STC) Fri 7:10-9:40 Sat 2-4:30-7:10-9:40 Sun 2-4:30-7:05-9:20 Mon-Thu 7:05-9:20
The Imitation Game (STC) Fri 7-9:50 Sat 1-4-7-9:50 Sun 1-4-6:50-9:30 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:30
Monster House (PG) Sat 11
Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (PG) Sat-Sun 1:30
Paddington (STC) Fri 6:40-9 Sat 12-2:30-5-6:40-9 Sun 12-2:30-5-6:20-8:40 Mon-Thu 6:20-8:40
Taken 3 (14) Fri 6:50-9:25 Sat 4:10-6:50-9:25 Sun 4:10-6:40-9:15 Mon-Thu 6:40-9:15
The Wedding Ringer (STC) Fri 7:25-10 Sat 12:35-3:35-7:25-10 Sun 12:35-3:35-7:15-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:40

Dartmouth Crossing 145 Shubie Dr.

American Sniper (STC) Fri-Sat 12:25-12:55-3:25-4:05-6:45-7:15-9:55-10:25 Sun 12:25-12:55-3:25-4:05-6:45-7:15-9:55-10:15 Mon 1:05-1:35-3:30-4-6:30-7-9:35-10:05 Tue 12:25-12:55-3:25-4:05-6:45-7:15-9:55-10:15 Wed 1:35-3:30-6:30-9:35 Wed 1:05-4-7-10:05 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 11 Thu 1:05-1:35-3:30-4-6:30-7-9:35-10:05
Blackhat (STC) Fri-Sat 1:15-4:20-7:25-10:30 Sun 1:15-4:20-7:20-10:15 Mon 1:10-4:10-7:05-10:05 Tue 1:15-4:20-7:25-10:20 Wed 1:10-4:10-10:05 Thu 1:10-4:10-7:05-10:05
Bolshoi Ballet: Swan Lake (STC) Sun 1:55
The Boy Next Door (STC) Fri-Sat 1-3:20-5:40-8-10-10:25 Sun 1-3:20-5:40-8-10:15 Mon 1:10-4:50-7:50-10:05 Tue 1-3:20-5:40-8-10-10:25 Wed-Thu 1:10-4:50-7:50-10:05
Exhibition OnScreen: Girl With a Pearl Earring (STC) Wed 7:30
The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies (PG) Fri-Sat 12:20-3:35 Sun 12:20 Mon 1:30-3:35 Tue 12:20-3:35 Wed-Thu 1:30-3:35
The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 6:50-10
The Imitation Game (STC) Fri-Sat 12:30-3:45-6:30-9:20 Sun 12:30-3:45-6:20-10:10 Mon 1:05-3:45-6:30-9:20 Tue 12:30-3:45-6:30-9:20 Wed-Thu 1:05-3:45-6:30-9:20
Monster House (PG) Sat 11
Mortdecai (STC) Fri-Sat 2:15-5-7:45-10:30 Sun 2:15-5-7:35-10:10 Mon 1-4:40-7:25-10:10 Tue 2:15-5-7:45-10:20 Wed-Thu 1-4:40-7:25-10:10 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 11
Paddington (STC) Fri-Sun 12:05-2:20-4:40-7-9:25 Mon 1:20-4:20-6:40-9:05

Tue 12:05-2:20-4:40-7-9:25 Wed 1:55-4:20-6:40-9:05 Thu 1:20-4:20-6:40-9:05
Project Almanac (STC) Thu 7-9:45
Selma (PG) Fri-Sat 12:50-3:50-7:10-10:05 Sun 3:50-7:10 Mon 1-3:55-6:50-9:45 Tue 12:50-3:50-7:10-10:05 Wed 12:50-3:55-6:50-9:45 Thu 12:50-3:55-6:40-9:05 Mon 6:40-9:05 Tue 6:50-9:15 Wed-Thu 6:40-9:05
The Wedding Ringer (STC) Fri 7:20-9:55 Sat 1:20-4:20-7:20-9:55 Sun 1:20-4:20-6:55-9:30 Mon 6:55-9:30 Tue 7:20-9:55 Wed-Thu 6:55-9:30
Bridgewater 349 Lahave St.
American Sniper (STC) Fri 6:15-9:10 Sat 12:40-3:35-6:30-9:30 Sun 12:40-3:35-6:30-8:50 Mon 6:10-9:05 Tue 6:15-9:10 Wed 6:10-9:05
Blackhat (STC) Fri 6:30 Sat 12:50-3:45-6:45 Sun 12:50-3:45-6:40 Mon 6:20 Tue 6:30 Wed-Thu 6:20
The Boy Next Door (STC) Fri 7:30-9:45 Sat 1:30-4:15-7:30-9:50 Sun 1:30-4:15-7:10-9:30 Mon 7-9:15 Tue 7:30-9:45 Wed-Thu 7-9:15
The Imitation Game (STC) Fri 6-8:45 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:10-6-9 Mon-Thu 6-8:45
Mortdecai (STC) Fri 6:45-9:25 Sat 1:10-3:55-7-9:35 Sun 1:10-3:55-6:50-9:20 Mon 6:30-9:10 Tue 6:45-9:25 Wed-Thu 6:30-9:10
Paddington (STC) Fri 7-9:20 Sat 1-3:20-6:15-8:50 Sun 1-3:20-6:15-9:25 Mon 6:40-9 Tue 7-9:20 Wed-Thu 6:40-9
Taken 3 (14) Fri 9:30 Sat 9:40 Sun 9:35 Mon 9:20 Tue 9:30 Wed-Thu 9:20
The Wedding Ringer (STC) Fri 7:15-9:40 Sat 1:20-4:05-7:15-9:45 Sun 1:20-4:05-7-9:25 Mon 6:50-9:15 Tue 7:15-9:40 Wed-Thu 6:50-9:15

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American Sniper (STC) Fri 6:30-9:25 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:25 Mon-Thu 6:30-9:25
Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance) (STC) Fri 6:40-9:25 Sat 12:40-3:40-6:40-9:25 Sun 12:40-3:40-6:35-9:20 Mon 6:35-9:20 Tue 6:40-9:25 Wed-Thu 6:35-9:20
The Boy Next Door (STC) Fri 7:30-9:45 Sat 1:30-4:30-7:30-9:45 Sun 1:30-4:30-7-9:15 Mon 7-9:15 Tue 7:30-9:45 Wed-Thu 7-9:15
The Imitation Game (STC) Fri 7-9:40 Sat 1-4-7-9:40 Sun 1-4-6:50-9:30 Mon 6:50-9:30 Tue 7-9:40 Wed-Thu

Ricardo is a Canadian chef, television host and author on a mission: To unite people through the pleasure of food. Discover his delicious and simple recipes every Friday — just in time for the weekend

A match made in java sidekick heaven

Dessert. Cinnamon and Pecan Coffee Cake is a great companion for your next cup of joe



RICARDO COOKS
Chef Ricardo
Ricardo Magazine

1. With the rack in the middle position, preheat the oven to 350 F (180 C). Generously butter an angel food cake pan with a removable bottom.

Topping

1. In a bowl, combine all dry ingredients. Add butter and mix with fingertips until the mixture is just moistened. Set aside.

Cake

1. In another bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.

2. In a third bowl, cream the butter, brown sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer. Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat until smooth. Add the dry ingredients alternately with the yogurt and stir until smooth.



This recipe serves 12. COURTESY RICARDOCUISINE.COM

3. Pour 1/2 cup (125 ml) of cake batter into a small bowl. Add the milk, cocoa powder and cinnamon and mix thoroughly. Set the cocoa batter aside.

4. Pour half of the vanilla cake batter into the prepared pan. Cover with cocoa batter. Sprinkle with half topping mix. Cov-

er with the remaining batter and the remaining topping.

5. Bake for about 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of the cake comes out clean. Let cool completely. Run a knife between the cake and the pan, then unmould.

Ingredients

Topping

- 1 1/2 cups (150 g) pecans, lightly toasted and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup (70 g) all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup (105 g) sugar
- 1/2 cup (120 g) brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup (115 g) unsalted butter, softened

Cake

- 2 1/2 cups (350 g) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup (170 g) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups (480 g) brown sugar
- 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla extract
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup (250 ml) plain yogurt
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) milk
- 1 tsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

Icing (optional)

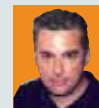
- 1/2 cup (65 g) icing sugar
- 2 tsp (10 ml) milk

Icing

6. Combine icing sugar and milk with fork. Drizzle on top of the cake. **FOLLOW RICARDO ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ON RICARDOCUISINE.COM OR SUBSCRIBE TO HIS MAGAZINE'S ENGLISH EDITION, WHICH LAUNCHED IN 2014.**

Liquid Assets

Toasting Robert Burns



LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

Short of the first few lines of Auld Lang Syne I'd be hard pressed to quote you much else written by Robert Burns.

Not that my lack of knowledge of old school verse will stop me from celebrating the bard this Sunday with a glass of scotch and mouthful of haggis.

Ok, I may pass on the haggis this year but Robbie Burns Day is an opportunity to get over any fear you have of Scottish whisky.

Though its fans may have just choked on that last line, truth is scotch is a polarizing booze. Even when blended (its mel-lowest incarnation) it can pound on our palate with Hulk-like aggression.

The Robert Burns Single Malt Whisky (\$44.95 - \$69.99) from the Isle of Arran Distillery is an appropriate dram.

The only malt to be endorsed by The World Robert Burns Federation, it's a soft, floral whisky with light fruity undertones that sips like poetry in a glass. **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**

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AUS basketball

Dalhousie faces Memorial in double-header

The Dalhousie Tigers host a double-header against the Memorial Sea-Hawks on the hardwood this weekend.

The women tip off at 6 p.m. Saturday and noon Sunday, while the men hit the court at 8 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday.

The Saint Mary's Huskies head to Charlottetown to take on the UPEI Panthers, with the women playing at 6 p.m. and the men following at 8 p.m. Friday. **METRO**

AUS hockey

Halifax teams play two games each on weekend

Halifax's AUS hockey teams hit the ice twice this weekend.

On the women's side, the Dalhousie Tigers visit the Moncton Aigles Bleues at 2 p.m. Saturday and St. Thomas Tommies at the same time Sunday, while the Saint Mary's Huskies host the UPEI Panthers at 7 p.m. Saturday and Moncton at the same time Sunday.

On the men's side, the Tigers welcome the UNB Varsity Reds at 7 p.m. Friday and Moncton at 7 p.m. Saturday, while the Huskies travel to take on St. Thomas at 7 p.m. Friday and UPEI at 7 p.m. Saturday.

METRO

For more local sports, go to
metronews.ca



Friends off the ice, heated rivals on it

AUS hockey. StFX's Normore and Mount Allison's James set to face off for final time



KRISTEN LIPSCOMBE
kristen.lipscombe@metronews.ca

They look chummy when the game is done, but until that final buzzer sounds, it's all business between Mount Allison Mounties left-winger Lindsay James of Halifax and St. Francis Xavier X-Women centre Alex Normore of Bedford.

The fifth-year female hockey players, close pals when they're not suited up, face off against each other for what could be the last time in their Atlantic University Sport careers Sunday afternoon — and they won't be playing nice on the ice.

"It's really competitive," James, 22, said Thursday via a Skype call with friend and foe Normore, also 22, a former linemate on Metro Boston Pizza of the Nova Scotia Female Midget AAA Hockey League.

"Every game, you never know who's going to win," Normore agreed.

In fact, James scored the game-winner in double overtime last season to help the Mounties edge the X-Women in the final game of a best-of-three semifinal series, knocking the defending AUS champions out of conference playoffs.

Yet currently, St. Francis Xavier is in first place with 17 straight wins and just one loss, while Mount Allison is fight-



Before their AUS rivalry, Lindsay James of the Mount Allison Mounties and Alex Normore of the St. Francis Xavier X-Women were teammates on Halifax-based Metro Boston Pizza of the Nova Scotia Female Midget AAA Hockey League. **ERICA ROBERTS/AUS**

ing for a playoff spot with a 5-12-1 record for seventh and last place in the regular-season standings.

"All the teams in the league are pretty close this year," said Normore, who has helped the X-Women to two AUS championships, in addition to CIS bronze and silver medals.

Normore is also a three-time AUS most valuable player, and was most recently named the league's female athlete of the week after breaking the X-Women scoring record with 200 career points, including a league-leading 27 this season.

"They have such a strong

Quoted

"Every year, the league is getting better and better."

X-Women forward Alex Normore

and deep team," James said, but emphasized "the season's not over yet."

After two seasons of playing midget together, summers spent dryland training side-by-side, and four years of battling it out for AUS bragging rights, that's just fine for the two bonded buddies, who are mak-

ing the most of their university careers, both in school and sport, until the very end.

Normore, who has earned a bachelor of science in human kinetics and leaves for Spain next week to represent Canada at the Winter Universiade Games, said the plan is to finish this season "with no regrets."

"It's been a great ride, to share that same experience," said James, who leaves Mount Allison with the same degree in chemistry. "We've had a great five years."

The puck drops Sunday at 2 p.m. AT in Sackville, N.B.

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Connor McDavid, centre, formed a tough line with Timo Meier and Travis Konecny in Team Orr's 6-0 win Thursday in St. Catharines, Ont. PETER POWER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

CHL. Cherry bombs versus Orr at top prospects game

Travis Konecny scored two goals and forced the turnover that led to another as part of an impressive showing at the CHL top prospects game.

Konecny of the Ontario Hockey League's Ottawa 67's skated with Connor McDavid and Timo Meier, and that line was a huge reason why Team Orr beat Team Cherry 6-0 at Meridian Centre Thursday night.

Ranked 26th among North American skaters on NHL Central Scouting's midterm list, Konecny was the best in office testing Wednesday, then stood out again in the game playing with and against his peers.

Konecny scored on a semi-breakaway, beating Owen Sound goaltender Michael McNiven high glove side and then on a give-and-go with Meier. He had the big hit that helped get McDavid the puck on Meier's goal, the second of the night for Team Orr.

Defenceman Ryan Pilon and forwards Nathan Noel and Paul Bittner scored for the team coached by Boston Bruins legend Bobby Orr. Goaltenders Nick McBride of the Western Hockey League's Prince Albert Raiders and Liam Herbst of the 67's combined for the shutout.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

All-Star game

Crosby out with lower-body injury

Sidney Crosby will miss the NHL all-star game because of a lower-body injury, the Penguins announced Thursday.

Crosby was playing with the injury and will need about a week to heal, the team said in a statement released on the eve of all-star weekend.

The reigning Hart Trophy

winner will have to miss Pittsburgh's next game, Jan. 27 vs. the Winnipeg Jets, as a result of not playing in the all-star game.

Earlier in the day, the Penguins announced star centre Evgeni Malkin would also miss the all-star game because of injury.

It was not immediately clear who would replace Crosby, who appeared in just one all-star game, back in 2007. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Voracek: The unlikely league-leading scorer

NHL. Ahead of Crosby, Seguin and others, the Flyers right-winger tops at the all-star break

The NHL's leading scorer at the all-star break has never cracked 70 points in a season.

His ascension past Sidney Crosby, Tyler Seguin and all of the best scorers in hockey has made Philadelphia Flyers right-winger Jakub Voracek one of the most surprising stories of the first half of the season.

On pace for 95 points in his sixth year in the league, Voracek has surprised even himself with this kind of production.

"I would be lying if I said I knew I was going to be leading the points by January," said Voracek, who prefers to be called Jake. "I've really worked hard for it. But it doesn't mean that I was on top for 45 games and now I just let up. I've just got to keep working hard and try to get better."

It's still not clear how much better Voracek can get. He set a career high in points last season with 62 and has 56 in 48 games so far this season, on 17 goals and 39 assists.

Some of that is thanks to fellow all-star Claude Giroux, his linemate for the past two-plus seasons. Giroux is tied for third in the league in scoring.

"G's a smart player and he makes those passes just at the right time. With Jake's speed and the way he brings pucks to the net — and he can also pass the puck — they're both good at everything," said Flyers forward Vincent Lecavalier, who

In points

No one expected the Kladno, Czech Republic, native to produce quite like this.

- **NHL.** Voracek had never even broken the 50-point mark till last season.
- **QMJHL.** With the Halifax Mooseheads he put up 186 points in 112 games over two seasons.

helped then-Lightning teammate Martin St. Louis win the Art Ross in 2004. "They're exceptional.... I think it just works well together."

Voracek and Giroux have excelled and produced even with a rotating cast of characters on left wing: Brayden Schenn, Matt Read, Michael Raffl and Wayne Simmonds. A lack of secondary scoring down the lineup, along with defensive miscues, has the Flyers well out of the playoff race.

But that's not Voracek's fault. The former Blue Jackets winger who was part of the deal that sent Jeff Carter to Columbus is enjoying his best season by far.

"I think it's more experience," Voracek said. "I'm more patient with the puck in the tight situations and on the power play."

"Every year I feel like when you gain that experience, when you play those games, you find different solutions sometimes for the situations on the ice. It's what it is: experience, work ethic, good teammates, good linemates. That's all it takes."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Jakob Voracek has a surprising 56 points in 48 games this season. By comparison, in 2013-2014, he set a career-high 62 points. ELSA/GETTY IMAGES FILE

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Golf

Putnam grabs early lead at La Quinta

Michael Putnam made nine birdies in an 11-hole stretch Thursday and finished with a 9-under 63 to take a one-stroke lead in the Humana Challenge.

Phil Mickelson had a 71 at California's La Quinta Country Club in his first event since the Ryder Cup.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA

Raps' Lowry voted into all-star game

The fans have spoken: Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry is an all-star.

Lowry made a late surge in fan balloting and will start for the Eastern Conference at the NBA all-star game. The scrappy Raptors guard passed Dwyane Wade in voting to get the start.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Seattle's Lynch fined \$20K, source says

The NFL has fined Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch \$20,000 for making an obscene gesture during last Sunday's NFC championship game, a person with knowledge of the fine told The Associated Press on Thursday.

The league did not specify what the gesture was in the win over Green Bay, but Lynch grabbed his crotch after scoring a go-ahead touchdown in the fourth quarter. Lynch was fined \$11,000 for a similar gesture in Seattle's win over Arizona on Dec. 21.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Marshawn Lynch GETTY IMAGES

We dunno: Pats' Belichick and Brady claim ignorance

NFL. New England representatives distance themselves from 'deflate-gate'

The two men most responsible for delivering wins for the New England Patriots both said Thursday they have no explanation for how footballs used to reach the Super Bowl were underinflated by two pounds per square inch.

Patriots quarterback Tom Brady said he has not been contacted by the NFL, even as league officials investigate whether the team cheated against the Indianapolis Colts.

"I don't know what happened," Brady said, answering questions from reporters hours after Patriots coach Bill Belichick said he almost never thinks about football pressure and doesn't know what happened, either.



Tom Brady and Bill Belichick share a word after Sunday's 45-7 AFC title win over the Colts. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unlike Belichick, who briefly answered questions after a long opening remark by repeatedly saying "I've told you everything I know" and "I don't

Quoted

"I've learned a lot more about this process in the last three days than I knew or have talked about it in the last 40 years that I've coached in this league." Bill Belichick

have an explanation," Brady answered many questions and said he doesn't think about football specifications.

"I get the snap, I drop back, I throw the ball," Brady said. "I don't sit there and try to squeeze it and determine that."

He does, however, have his preferences — he likes the football to be pumped to 12.5 pounds per square inch of air pressure, he said. The NFL requires balls to be inflated between 12.5 and 13.5 pounds per square inch.

"To me, that's a perfect grip for the football," he said. "I

would never do anything outside the rules of play."

With different approaches, Belichick and Brady sent a unified message: Both said they have no clue how the footballs were tampered with or switched, and started learning about the issue along with fans and everyone else.

"I have no knowledge of anything, any wrongdoing," Brady said when asked who on the Patriots was responsible for the underinflated footballs. "I'm very comfortable saying nobody did it as far as I know."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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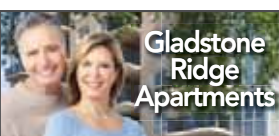
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Stuck on 12 Across?
Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.



→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries

March 21 - April 20

This will be a busy day and you will get many important tasks out of the way. But don't forget about love. Let that special someone know that they mean the world to you.

♉ Taurus

April 21 - May 21

You will get along with people in positions of authority well today and if you need a favour now is the time to ask. But don't let it go to your head.

♊ Gemini

May 22 - June 21

Someone you think of highly has been waiting for you to declare your friendship, and maybe even your passion. If you do it today your relationship will go from good to great.

♋ Cancer

June 22 - July 23

Make forgive and forget your motto today. According to the planets it simply is not worth your while continuing some kind of feud. Let it go.

♌ Leo

July 24 - Aug. 23

There is a ruthlessness about you right now, especially in partnership matters where you have no intention of letting anyone take advantage of you. Try not to be too hard-hearted.

♍ Virgo

Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

Be careful what you spend your money on today because if you waste it on things you don't really need you will find yourself short of cash.

♎ Libra

Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

Give a friend or family member the benefit of the doubt today, even if you suspect they are telling you lies. According to your solar chart you won't lose out financially or emotionally.

♏ Scorpio

Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

You don't usually lack in the common sense department but today you will do something illogical. Others will be shocked but maybe that's the idea.

♐ Sagittarius

Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

By helpful today but be wary too, especially of people who try to persuade you to lend them money. According to the planets they are up to no good.

♑ Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

The more someone tries to convince you that you can do something wrong because it will lead to something right the further the distance you need to put between you.

♒ Aquarius

Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

You don't have to fight to get what you need. On the contrary, you will get everything you desire over the next two or three days simply by appealing to other people's generosity.

♓ Pisces

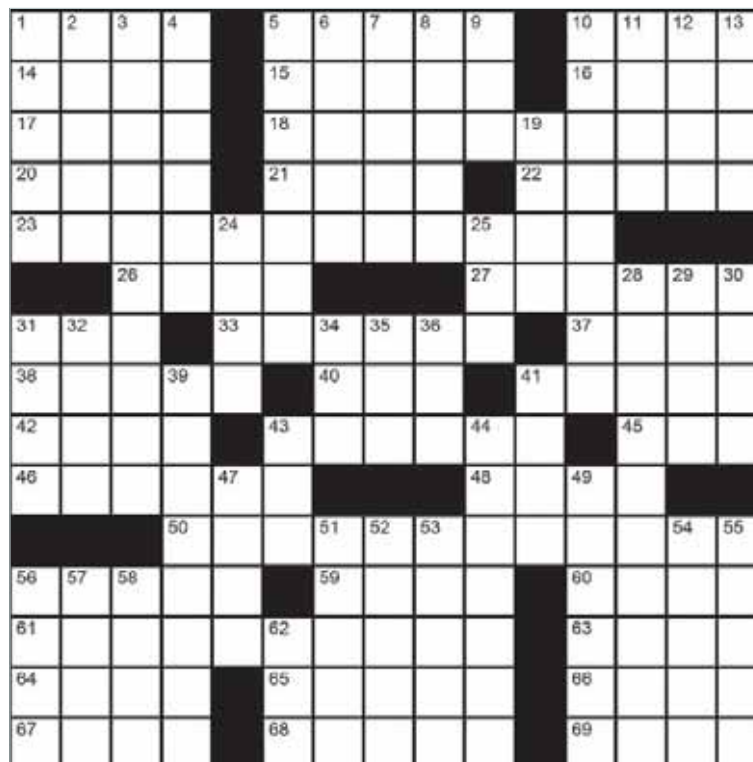
Feb. 20 - March 20

If you have a secret, stay quiet. It may be about someone you don't care for but if it becomes public knowledge you will get blamed for the consequences.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan

Across

1. Belonging to BC's ocean
5. Buddhist who has attained Nirvana
10. Rec room locale
14. Rhyming pattern
15. Stables sound
16. Man: Italian
17. Ms. Downey
18. Current album by Canadian band Mounties: '___ Legacy'
20. Lines giver
21. Islamic leader
22. Foot-to-leg connector
23. New animated movie; or, ELO song: 2 wds.
26. ___ Ben Adhem (Leigh Hunt poem)
27. Gain
31. 2002 Winter Olympics locale [acronym]
33. Sacred river rising in the Himalayas
37. Perfect
38. Traveller Mr. Polo
40. Mr. Cruise
41. Now ___ be told
42. At all
43. Big divides
45. And: German
46. Southeastern Saskatchewan town
48. Pres. Lincoln's
50. Gordon Lightfoot's "Song for a ___"
56. "___ Less Ordinary" (1997)
59. Go ___ great



Down

67. Grown-up eft
68. That is, in Latin: 2 wds.
69. WWII fighter plane
1. ___ nationaux du Canada
2. Concerning
3. Reporter's entour-

age: 2 wds.

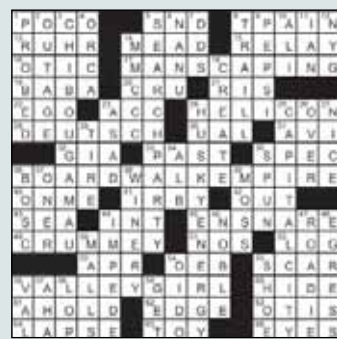
4. Ancient Egypt's divine beetle
5. Barbuda's island nation partner
6. Movie producer Robert
7. Veronica Lodge's father
8. Lizard type

9. Ordinal suffixes

10. Nova Scotia: ___ Head Park, 'Home of the World's Highest Record Tides'
11. Vancouver-born broadcaster, ___ Yin Lee
12. Nero's 2150
13. Particular puff

19. Snipped stuff
24. Cancelled
25. Li'l navigation aid
28. Marketing feed-back source: 2 wds.
29. ___ uproar: 2 wds.
30. Mind
31. Diving duck
32. Etna extraction
34. Utmost degree
35. Portuguese colony in India, once
36. First aid team [acronym]
39. Siksika chief in Alberta (b. circa 1830 - d.1890)
41. Paperback's ID
43. Coke container
44. Tony "___" Young (Canadian broadcaster who is an alum of MuchMusic)
47. Layer
49. Card game, Crazy
51. Considered
52. Ink: French
53. Wheezing noises
54. Salon rinse
55. Shannon ___ (Reality TV star born in St John's, Newfoundland)
56. Cole Porter's "I ___ Love"
57. Misplace
58. "___ a pudgy tat!" - Tweety Bird
62. Gladiator's 901

Yesterday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

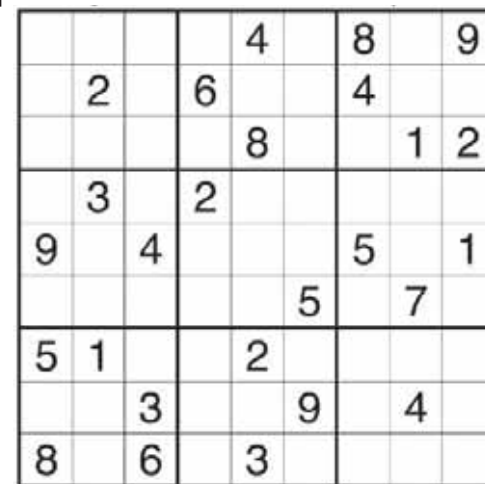


Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku



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